

called to present and explain the policy change to local settlers. Significantly, one of them was the father of Peter Ludvigsen, the war's first casualty.<sup>44</sup> A rush of optimism attended the epistle and the war-frazzled Saints immediately rejoiced as if peace already existed. "The Breatheren [sic] will be most Happy at once more enjoying Peace," Warren Snow dictated from his bed in Manti the very day he learned of the shift in strategy. Chronicling some of the economic challenges the war imposed, Snow complained that for fear of Indians the Saints were unable to go to the mountains for lumber to finish their homes and granaries or to fence their fields. Even prohibited from getting firewood, they had been forced "to use fencing &c for fuel." "We find by Experiance [sic] your Council to be true," Snow assured Young, "better feed the Indians than fight them' *and far Cheaper!*"<sup>45</sup>

As soon as Young's new peace policy was announced, scores of Sanpete Saints recklessly rushed to the canyons after wood as though the war were over. Meanwhile, Sanpitch sent a runner with news of the prophet's peace proposals to Black Hawk. The courier returned sometime later with word that the war chief flatly rejected Young's overtures, defiantly declaring that he would fight to the death.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately for some Sanpete Latter-day Saints, word of Black Hawk's response was not quickly disseminated, and they learned from the raiders themselves in the most daring raid to date that the war was far from over.

### The Ephraim Massacre

On the morning of 17 October, sixteen men from Ephraim took work teams and wagons up a canyon east of town. Spreading out some distance on the road, they spent the morning gathering firewood and fence poles, and felling large trees for lumber. About 2:00 P.M. twenty mounted Indians led by Black Hawk, "who carried a big shield," attacked a group of six woodsmen, immediately killing one of them. The dead man's comrades scattered, frantically warning other whites as they started a desperate five-mile footrace back to town. The raiders

<sup>44</sup> Warren S. Snow to Brigham Young, 3 October 1865, BYC; and Weibye, "Journal," 4 October 1865. George Peacock was the senior Ludvigsen's traveling companion. "Our mission," Peacock noted, "was one of peace, and the good Spirit was with us." Peacock, Journal, 6 October 1865.

<sup>45</sup> Warren S. Snow to Brigham Young, 3 October 1865. Italics mine.

<sup>46</sup> M.D. Hambleton to Brigham Young, 22 October 1865, BYC; Weibye, "Journal," 22-26 October 1865; and JH, 6 November 1865, 1.

stopped long enough to brutalize a Danish convert, viciously dismembering him with his own axe. Luckily for the whites, the Indians stopped at each wagon long enough to slash harnesses and free the oxen, inadvertently giving most of the sprinters time to reach the safety of a local gristmill. The slowest runner, however, was overtaken and killed on the flats near the mouth of the canyon.

On emerging from the canyon, the Indians saw a covered carriage with three riders approaching Ephraim on the road from Manti and dashed towards the vehicle. Seeing the raiders from a distance, the three Mormons speculated as to whether or not they were in danger. A Danish woman blurted out, "they are going to hurt us." The American driver tried to calm her by suggesting that it was "Chief Sanpitch bringing the Indians down to make peace." The third occupant of the carriage, another Dane, nervously pointed out that the Indians were "riding very recklessly."

Black Hawk's men stopped and readied their weapons as the carriage approached them. The driver, who had calmly walked his horses to this point, now gave them free rein. As the carriage passed the waiting Indians at full gallop, the raiders stoically "leveled their guns" and fired. The horses reportedly were a pair of trained racing animals; one was mortally wounded but ran on as though no damage had been done. Filling the air with war whoops, the Indians gave chase, but most of their exhausted ponies could not catch up with the fresher animals pulling the carriage. Mounted on a superior horse, though, Jake Arapeen rode adjacent to the whites and emptied his revolver at them. The woman buried her face in her lap as her countryman scrambled over the dashboard and crouched on the carriage tongue between the horses. Meanwhile, the driver courageously urged his animals on with a whip. Unsuccessful with his pistol, Jake shot arrows point blank into the carriage, sinking one six inches into the driver's back. Finally the carriage outdistanced Jake and the others, who chased it right to the edge of the settlement.

The raiders then turned their attention to a number of frightened Latter-day Saints who were running in from fields where they had been digging potatoes. Falling in behind two women and a man carrying a baby boy (all Danes), they waited before shooting until the group was within a few yards of the first row of Mormon homes. Morton Kuhre, the man with the child, was allegedly shot in the back with bullets and arrows by Black Hawk himself. Kuhre's wife grabbed the child as she passed her husband's body but after running a few more yards was shot

in the back herself. Kuhre's seventeen-year-old sister-in-law was then killed with arrows. Men, women, and children watched with horror from nearby Ephraim windows and streets as an Indian reached down from his horse and picked up the screaming infant. Thoughtfully observing the child for a moment as if deciding whether or not to kill it, the Indian at last set the boy "gently" on the breast of his dying mother and rode off to join his associates.

The raiders next collected a herd of about a hundred cattle ranging south of town. A good number of Ephraim's men were away, and, as Orson Hyde later pointed out, those who remained were "frightened and paralyzed even to stupidity." Most of Ephraim's males were Scandinavian converts who had ignored Young's instructions to buy guns; they armed themselves with pitchforks and axes and watched from the village's southernmost street as the Indians ran off their cattle. A few Danes recklessly ran towards the herd with only one load in their guns, forgetting to take ammunition with them. Fortunately for them, the Indians were so occupied with driving away their booty that they paid the unseasoned foreigners little heed.

Better armed and more experienced, the few American men on hand moved towards the gristmill to try to keep the Indians from driving the herd into the canyon. Thwarted by Indian sharpshooters, the few Mormons brave enough to do anything at all followed the animals towards the canyon, taking scattered shots as they went. Near "Guard Knoll" (so called because prior to their newfound "peace" the people of Ephraim generally posted picket guards there to warn them of just such a raid) the Indians made a stand against their pursuers. During the shooting a seventh settler was killed and badly mutilated. Put to flight, the defenders returned dejectedly to the settlement and sent word of the attack to General Snow, who was still convalescing in Manti.<sup>47</sup>

Shortly after the Indians escaped into the canyon with the cattle, Orson Hyde arrived from Spring City totally unaware of the tragedy. The apostle was shocked at the lack of courage demonstrated by the Scandinavians; for, although there were Americans willing to lead a

<sup>47</sup> JH, 18 October 1865, 1-2; Gottfredson, *Indian Depredations*, 169-75; Weibye, "Journal," between entries for 22 and 26 October 1865, in Danish; Peacock, Journal, 18 October 1865; Canute Peterson, Bishop of Ephraim, to George A. Smith, 11 September 1867, GAS; Orson Hyde to Brigham Young, 18 October 1865, BYC; Kuhre, Interview; Samuel Pitchforth to George A. Smith, 30 November 1865, GAS; DUP, *Treasures of Pioneer History*, 2:463; and DUP, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, 9:179, 11:281.



force against the Indians, they "could hardly induce a man to follow them." What made it worse, Hyde observed, was that "never was there a better opportunity" to destroy Black Hawk's "whole squad." According to Hyde, the Scandinavians were "good to raise wheat, cattle, and horses but seem[ed] totally inadequate for an emergency of that kind."<sup>48</sup>

Fearing another attack, the Mormons waited until the following day to bring in the remains of their seven slaughtered friends. The bodies, one without arms, legs, and head, were laid out in the meetinghouse for all to see. The sight of the mutilated corpses and the loss of most of Ephraim's livestock fueled the burgeoning hatred for Indians felt by the Sanpete Saints. Afraid even to venture out of town as far as the local cemetery, the settlers temporarily interred their dead in a shallow grave near their meetinghouse. That day Elder Hyde sent word of the massacre to Salt Lake City, tersely noting that "this is the evidence [the raiders] give us of their disposition to make peace!" Viewing the bodies filled Hyde with "chagrin and mortification," and the angry apostle threatened to excommunicate the negligent Latter-day Saints if they did not immediately sell their "new chicago wagons" and buy guns and ammunition.<sup>49</sup>

Church authorities in Salt Lake City were equally upset over the calamity. "The proposals for peace were accompanied with instructions to the Settlements to in no ways relax their vigilance," thundered George A. Smith. "Really, was there no horses kept up ready to mount in Ephraim?" he asked in disbelief. "Was there no Serjeant or Corporal who could follow out and recover the cattle without sending to Manti to find if bro. Snow was at home?" Brigham Young himself was appalled at the "stupidity of our settlements and their recklessness of life," especially after "the many years of counsel" he had given them to build forts, buy guns, and not unwisely expose themselves to Indian attacks. Like Apostles Hyde and Smith, however, he was resigned to the fact that "the architects of Zion" had to "work with such material as the Lord has provided, stupidity, wooden shoes, and cork brains thrown into the bargain."<sup>50</sup>

### **Black Hawk Escalates the War**

Within days of the Ephraim Massacre, Mormons became aware that the killings were the expression of an almost universal anger against

<sup>48</sup> Orson Hyde to George A. Smith, 29 October 1865, GAS.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> George A. Smith to Orson Hyde, 22 October 1865, HOLB, 2:506-9.